

Remarks/Arguments

Re claim 15: A visual comparison of Miller (US 5,916,493), Fig. 1 and 2, and Wood (US 4,676,237) Fig. 1 and 2 with the application, Fig. 1 to 3 shows that Miller and Wood disclose a humidifier system and an inhaler device which comprise a liquid reservoir (16, 76 and 14) and a humidifier chamber (22 and 32), wherein the liquid reservoir is below the humidifier chamber. In contrast thereto, according to the application, the liquid reservoir is above the humidifier chamber and in particular above a "thin liquid layer" (cf. application, claim 6).

Re claim 16-26: These novel configurations are not shown in the prior art such as the half thread of claim 18, the bayonet catch of claim 19 or the thin liquid layer of claim 20.

Re claim 22: Miller, col. 2, l. 37-40, col. 4, l. 9-11 and col. 6, l. 66-col. 7, l. 8 is related to the orientation of the humidifier system. The amended claims define the structural differences between the application and the prior art. Page four, lines 11 to 16 explains the advantage of a PTC-resistor and the following paragraph the benefit of special electrical terminals.

Re claim 27-28: In accordance with the disclosure of the cited prior art documents, a wick (90 and 76, respectively) lifts the liquid by "capillary action" (Miller, col. 7, l. 17; Wood, col. 4, l. 28). In accordance with the application, water simply flows out of the reservoir until low pressure in the reservoir retains the water. The present invention has a well-defined leakage explained on page 5 lines 11 to 26 stating that the seal is "substantially imperviously" (l. 16) so that the water "... flows out ... defined manner ..." in l 14 -15. New claim 27 has a well-defined leakage via the notch in the rim. There is no rim notch in Wood or Miller or in any of the prior art cited. The applicant asks for clarification regarding the refusal given in light of Miller and/or Wood.